

CHAPTER XIV

UNCLEANNES AND THE EVIL EYE

Demonism and the aleatory interest. — Universality of primitive demonism. — Uncleaness. — Female uncleaness. — Uncleaness in ethnography. — Uncleaness in higher religions. — Uncleaness amongst Jews. — Uncleaness amongst Greeks. — These customs produced modesty and the subordination of women. — Uncleaness, holiness, devotedness. — The evil eye; *jettatura*. — The evil eye in ethnography. — Amulets against the evil eye. — Devices against the evil eye. — Insult and vituperation against the evil eye. — Interaction of the mores and the evil eye.

556. Demonism and the aleatory interest. Uncleaness and the evil eye are dogmatic notions, products of demonism. The dogmas are arbitrary. A corpse is unclean and makes any one unclean who touches it. A baby is not unclean. The evil eye brings bad luck, not pain or disease. Uncleaness and the evil eye have each a field. Neither is of universal application. The mores, starting out from primitive demonism, produced these two dogmas as an adjustment of experience and observation to demonism. Uncleaness is a very rude and primary expression of the unsanitary and contagious. It undoubtedly often happens that calamity befalls in the hour of success and rejoicing. A number of people were trodden to death on the Brooklyn bridge when it was opened. A few centuries ago, and in all ancient times, such an incident would have been accepted as the obvious chastisement of the superior powers on the overweening pride of men. The same might be said of the death of Mr. Huskisson at the opening of the first railroad. The sum of such incidents stands in some relation to fundamental superstitions about demons, if such are believed. The incidents can be fitted into the doctrines very easily. The whole aleatory interest is a field for this kind of general dogmas

of the application of fundamental principles to
classes of cases.
The folkways, deeply concerned in the aleatory
interest, work out
the applications.